

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
P. O. Box 3378  
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378  
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

**Testimony in SUPPORT of S.B. 512  
RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM  
INCENTIVES**

SENATOR MIKE GABBARD, CHAIR  
SENATOR CLARENCE K. NISHIHARA, VICE CHAIR  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Hearing Date: February 5, 2021

Room Number: Videoconference

**Fiscal Implications:** The Department of Health (DOH) defers to the Department of Agriculture (DOA) regarding the implementation and fiscal impacts of this bill, and to the priorities set forth in the Executive Budget Request.

**Department Testimony:** DOH supports Senate Bill 512 (S.B. 512) to expand the double up food bucks program administered by the DOA to make Hawaii-grown fruits and vegetables, and healthy proteins sold at farmers' markets and grocery stores accessible to families or individuals who reside in this State and who receive assistance through the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). This measure would remove the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by SNAP beneficiaries and adds healthy proteins to the program.

Major health authorities (including the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Centers for Disease Control, and the World Health Organization) recommend increasing fruit and vegetable intake as a means to prevent chronic disease and improve overall health.<sup>1,2,3</sup> However, access to

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Agriculture. *2015 – 2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. 8<sup>th</sup> Edition. December 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. *Strategies to Prevent Obesity and Other Chronic Diseases: The CDC Guide to Strategies to Increase the Consumption of Fruits and Vegetables*. Atlanta: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 2011.

<sup>3</sup> World Health Organization. *Healthy Diet Fact Sheet N°394*. Web. Updated September 2015.

1 fresh produce for income-limited individuals can be difficult and is one of the reasons why they  
2 often have poorer diets and higher rates of chronic disease than middle class and wealthy  
3 individuals.<sup>4,5</sup> This bill expands the double up food bucks program and removes the \$10 per visit  
4 per day cap enabling SNAP recipients to double their purchasing power when they use their  
5 benefits to purchase local fruits and vegetables, and healthy proteins.

6 Nutrition incentive programs similar to the one proposed in this bill are prevalent around  
7 the United States, with twenty-eight states currently implementing a double up food bucks  
8 program. In Hawaii, less than one in five adults reported eating five or more fruits and  
9 vegetables a day (2015 Behavioral Risk Factors Surveillance System). Hawaii has the highest  
10 cost of living in the nation with food costs that are 82% higher than the national average.<sup>6</sup>  
11 Nutrition incentives are often touted as a “win-win-win” for farmers, families, and local  
12 businesses. Data from these interventions have shown improvements in dietary behaviors,  
13 reduction in household hunger and food insecurity, and increased sales of local produce (by more  
14 than their dollar value alone).<sup>7,8,9</sup> As a result of previous efforts around double up food bucks  
15 between 2018 and 2020, the number of all SNAP-participating households in Hawaii with access  
16 to a double up food bucks retailer near their homes increased by 272%.<sup>10</sup> By the end of 2020,  
17 program expansion resulted in two-thirds (77%) of all SNAP-participating households having a  
18 double up food bucks retailer within a reasonable shopping distance of their homes.<sup>11</sup> DOH  
19 supports S.B. 512 as one component of a comprehensive approach to improve the availability

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<sup>4</sup> Hawaii Health Data Warehouse, Hawaii State Department of Health, Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, 2016.

<sup>5</sup> Simmet, Anja et al. *The Dietary Quality of Food Pantry Users: A Systematic Review of Existing Literature*. Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Volume 117, Issue 4, 563 – 576.

<sup>6</sup> US Department of Agriculture: Official USDA Food Thrifty Plans

<sup>7</sup> Fitzgerald, Katherine. *Double Up in Farmers’ Markets: The Consumer Experience*. Fair Food Network, 2015.

<sup>8</sup> Mann, J., et al. *Economics of healthy food incentives at Michigan farmers markets: Study highlights*. Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems, 2017.

<sup>9</sup> Fitzgerald, Katherine. *Double Up Food Bucks and Hunger*. Fair Food Network, 2015.

<sup>10</sup> Buchthal, Vanessa. *Access to SNAP Double-Bucks Food Retailers triples for Hawaii’s SNAP-participating households between 2018 and 2020*. 2021

<sup>11</sup> Buchthal, Vanessa. *Access to SNAP Double-Bucks Food Retailers triples for Hawaii’s SNAP-participating households between 2018 and 2020*. 2021

1 and accessibility of healthy foods to improve health outcomes for people in Hawaii, especially  
2 for those who face greater health disparities.

3 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.

**DAVID Y. IGE**  
Governor

**JOSH GREEN**  
Lt. Governor



**PHYLLIS SHIMABUKURO-GEISER**  
Chairperson, Board of Agriculture

**MORRIS M. ATTA**  
Deputy to the Chairperson

State of Hawaii  
**DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**  
1428 South King Street  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814-2512  
Phone: (808) 973-9600 FAX: (808) 973-9613

**TESTIMONY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
BEFORE THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

**FEBRUARY 5, 2021  
1:00 P.M.  
VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**SENATE BILL NO. 512  
RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES**

Chairperson Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on Senate Bill 512. This bill removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) beneficiaries under the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program (DA BUX) and specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program.

The Department of Agriculture supports the bill to expand the double up food bucks program and will administer the program as provided in the bill to make locally-grown fruits and vegetables sold at farmers' markets, grocery stores and community-supported agriculture projects accessible to families or individuals who reside in this State and who receive assistance through the federal SNAP funding.

The DA BUX Program authorized by Act 153/SLH 2019 was appropriated \$50,000 which when leveraged through The Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program and CARES Act award matched by Philanthropy resulted in \$2.4 million in funds for redemptions for the DA BUX program by SNAP beneficiaries.

Since the launch in June 2020 of the statewide program, there have been 119,051 redemptions by unique household by County through December 15, 2020. Total redemptions for DA BUX through January 2021 are estimated at \$1.4 million and the funds are expected to



be exhausted by June 2021. This expectation is based on The Department of Human Services reporting a total of 189,285 SNAP recipients in December 2020, which is an increase of 19.54% compared to 154,377 recipients in December 2019 and an additional 12,769 recipients reported from July to December 2020.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



# UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII SYSTEM

## Legislative Testimony

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Testimony Presented Before the  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Friday, February 5, 2021 at 1:00 p.m.

By  
Nicholas Comerford, Dean  
College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

### SB 512 – RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara, and members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of the general intent of SB 512 relating to augmenting access to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

The College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources (CTAHR), by way of its Human Nutrition program, has responsibility for SNAP Education via the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa (UHM), CTAHR Cooperative Extension Service. Therefore, CTAHR has a vested interest in this bill as it will affect our educational programs.

The State of Hawai'i, by initiating the Double Up Food Bucks program, made a significant impact on the health, nutrition, and poverty of citizens of Hawai'i. This current bill expands the value of the Double Up Food Bucks program by allowing recipients to use SNAP funds at a farmer's market, farm stand, mobile market, a community-supported agriculture project, grocery store or other direct retailer. Expanding access will only further assist those in need by making available more sources of nutritious food; while supporting Hawai'i agriculture. We recommend language be added to expand the use of SNAP resources at any of the food outlets mentioned above, when they are compliant with the food safety criteria of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration and the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Otherwise, the health objective of this bill could be compromised.

The bill's language says that the SNAP match can be used exclusively to buy Hawai'i-grown fresh fruits and vegetables. This puts an unrealistic onus on the recipient to search out specific sources of food. The primary purpose of the SNAP program is to effect the health and nutrition of those experiencing hard times. That should remain the main purpose of the SNAP and the Double Bucks program. We believe that assisting Hawai'i agriculture will be an obvious outcome when Hawai'i agriculture enhances its crop production.

UHM and CTAHR supports the intent of SB 512, but provides comments relative to food safety and the requirement to buy only Hawai'i-grown produce.

The University supports the intent of this bill as described above but is aware of the current financial climate of the State of Hawai'i and realizes that state funding is reduced. For the next fiscal biennium, the University of Hawai'i Board of Regents approved a budget request for the University that was flat, and did not seek any increased funding to the University. UH defers to the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture on their priorities.



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
**Executive Office on Early Learning**  
2759 South King Street  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96826

February 4, 2020

**TO:** Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

**FROM:** Lauren Moriguchi, Director  
Executive Office on Early Learning

**SUBJECT:** **Measure:** S.B. No. 512 – RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES  
**Hearing Date:** February 5, 2021  
**Time:** 1:00 p.m.  
**Location:** videoconference

**Bill Description:** Removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program beneficiaries under the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program. Specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program. Makes an appropriation to the department of agriculture to expand funding for the program.

**EXECUTIVE OFFICE ON EARLY LEARNING'S POSITION: Support the Intent**

Good afternoon. I am Lauren Moriguchi, Director of the Executive Office on Early Learning (EOEL). EOEL supports the intent of S.B. 512.

EOEL is statutorily responsible for the development of the State's early childhood system that shall ensure a spectrum of high-quality development and learning opportunities for children throughout the state, from prenatal care until the time they enter kindergarten, with priority given to underserved or at-risk children.

According to the Scientific Report of the 2015 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee, healthy eating in childhood is important for children's growth and development and prevents various health conditions. The 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend that children from ages 2 years and older follow a healthy eating pattern that includes fruits and vegetables, whole grains, fat-free and low-fat dairy products, and a variety of protein foods. Unfortunately, reports indicate that most children do not follow the recommendations set forth in those guidelines.

When COVID-19 hit the islands, it was clear that food insecurity affects many homes. Young children who experience food insecurity may be at higher risk for health ailments as well as developmental risks and behavioral problems, including aggression, anxiety, and depression. All these issues impact the growth and development of our youngest children, impacting their ability to learn.



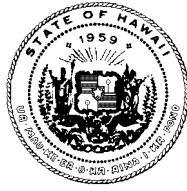
The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides nearly 170,000 Hawaii residents with monthly benefits to purchase food. Nationally, almost half of SNAP beneficiaries are children. The popular national model, Double Up Food Bucks, which matches the purchase of locally-grown produce for produce, not only supports families and children with accessing healthy, nutritious food, but also local farmers.

**Because the EOEL Public Pre-K Program targets our underserved and at-risk children, we work with educators and families in the Program and across the early childhood system by arming them with information on resources that can help support their children's health and well-being.**

Recognizing the importance that nutrition plays in children's growth, development, and learning experiences, the EOEL supports the intent of this bill, which would expand healthier food options through the Double Up Food Bucks Program to eligible families and children.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this bill.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR



CATHY BETTS  
DIRECTOR

JOSEPH CAMPOS II  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR

STATE OF HAWAII  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES**

P. O. Box 339  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96809-0339

February 1, 2021

TO: The Honorable Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

FROM: Cathy Betts, Director

SUBJECT: **SB 512 – RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE  
PROGRAM INCENTIVES**

Hearing: Friday, February 5, 2021, 1:00 p.m.  
Via Videoconference, State Capitol

**DEPARTMENT'S POSITION:** The Department of Human Services (DHS) supports the intent of this bill. DHS defers to the Department of Agriculture as to program development and implementation issues.

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of the bill removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program beneficiaries under the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program. Specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program. Makes an appropriation to the department of agriculture to expand funding for the program.

The Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program dollar-for-dollar matching program helps Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participants increase their purchase of fresh fruits and vegetables by doubling the value of their benefits spent on Hawaii-grown fresh fruits and vegetables, supports local farmers, and keeps food dollars in the local economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on this bill.

OFFICE OF ECONOMIC REVITALIZATION  
**CITY AND COUNTY OF HONOLULU**

777 WARD AVE • HONOLULU, HAWAII 96814  
PHONE: (808) 768-5764 • EMAIL: [oeer@honolulu.gov](mailto:oeer@honolulu.gov)



RICK BLANGIARDI  
MAYOR

AMY ASSELBAYE  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Testimony of  
AMY ASSELBAYE  
Executive Director  
Office of Economic Revitalization

before the  
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT  
Friday, February 5, 2021  
1:00 PM  
Via Videoconference

In SUPPORT of  
SB 512– SUPPLEMENTAL NURITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES

Dear Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara, and Members of the Committee:

The City and County of Honolulu Office of Economic Revitalization **supports** Senate Bill 512, which removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program beneficiaries under the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program. The bill also specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program and makes an appropriation to the State Department of Agriculture to expand funding for the program.

The COVID-19 pandemic has demonstrated a pressing need for increased feeding assistance for hungry families. By December 2020, Hawaii saw a 20% increase in SNAP recipients to over 189,000 recipients in the state. That means for every 10 people on our islands, one and a half don't have enough money to put good food on the table. By expanding the Double Up Food Bucks program, SB 512 will help to make fresh local foods more affordable to hungry families, who during this pandemic need the support to stay healthy.

In addition to providing food access for hungry families, an expansion of the Double Up Food Bucks program will support the economic revitalization efforts that our office has addressed throughout the pandemic. Incentivizing the purchase of locally-produced food for hungry families is an investment in food security on our island, which supports local farmers and the agriculture sector overall. By encouraging local food purchases,

Chair Gabbard  
SB 512  
February 5, 2021  
Page 2

this program helps to keep food dollars within the local economy, providing essential economic stimulation during the current economic downturn. SNAP recipients' purchases of local food ripple throughout the economy, generating \$1.54 in economic activity for every dollar as it runs through the supply chain, supporting farmers, retailers, food distributors, and their employees. The Office of Economic Revitalization believes the Double Up Food Bucks program is a critical matched funding tool to reinforce the ways we take care of each other on these islands and can help to rebuild a more resilient and diverse economy.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Friday, February 5, 2021; 1:00 p.m.  
Via Videoconference**

**RE: SENATE BILL NO. 0512, RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE  
PROGRAM INCENTIVES.**

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara, and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Primary Care Association (HPCA) is a 501(c)(3) organization established to advocate for, expand access to, and sustain high quality care through the statewide network of Community Health Centers throughout the State of Hawaii. The HPCA **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill No. 0512, RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES.

The bill, as received by your Committee, would expand the successful Double Up Food Bucks Program (Program) by:

- (1) Eliminating the \$10 per visit per day cap on benefits received;
- (2) Allowing healthy proteins to be purchased under the Program; and
- (3) Appropriating an unspecified amount of general funds for fiscal years 2021-2022, and 2022-2023 for Program administration.

By way of background, the HPCA represents Hawaii Federally-Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). FQHCs provide desperately needed medical services at the frontlines in rural and underserved communities. Long considered champions for creating a more sustainable, integrated, and wellness-oriented system of health, FQHCs provide a more efficient, more effective and more comprehensive system of healthcare.

The COVID-19 pandemic has severely threatened the health and welfare of our citizens, especially Hawaii's underprivileged and rural communities. With so many people unemployed, entire families are struggling to put food on the table on a consistent basis. All one needs to do is visit one of our member FQHC's food distribution events and see the line of cars stretch for miles and people wait

for hours to receive some surplus food. It is shocking yet uplifting to see that people do care for their fellow citizens.

The HPCA has gone on the record in support of this Program in previous years. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has greatly exacerbated the need for this Program. Additional Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits for a recipient might mean the difference between having to decide whether someone's last amount of cash will go for food or rent or medication or other necessities.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Public Affairs and Policy Director Erik K. Abe at 536-8442, or [eabe@hawaiiipca.net](mailto:eabe@hawaiiipca.net).

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 1/31/2021 8:50:11 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
David Mulinix	Testifying for Our Revolution Hawaii	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Kakou,

On behalf of Our Revolution Hawaii's 7,000 members and supporters statewide, we are fully in support of this legislation.

Dave Mulinix, Organizer

Our Revolution Hawaii



1050 Bishop St. PMB 235 | Honolulu, HI 96813  
P: 808-533-1292 | e: info@hawaiiifood.com

#### Executive Officers

**Joe Carter**, Coca-Cola Bottling of Hawaii, *Chair*  
**Charlie Gustafson**, Tamura Super Market, *Vice Chair*  
**Eddie Asato**, The Pint Size Corp., *Secretary/Treas.*  
**Lauren Zirbel**, HFIA, *Executive Director*  
**John Schlif**, Rainbow Sales and Marketing, *Advisor*  
**Stan Brown**, Acosta Sales & Marketing, *Advisor*  
**Paul Kosasa**, ABC Stores, *Advisor*  
**Derek Kurisu**, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*  
**Beau Oshiro**, C&S Wholesale Grocers, *Advisor*  
**Toby Taniguchi**, KTA Superstores, *Advisor*

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TO:

Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair

FROM: HAWAII FOOD INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION  
Lauren Zirbel, Executive Director

DATE: February 2, 2021  
TIME: 1pm  
PLACE: Via Video Conference

RE: SB512 Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

Position: Strong Support

The Hawaii Food Industry Association is comprised of two hundred member companies representing retailers, suppliers, producers, and distributors of food and beverage related products in the State of Hawaii.

The Double Up Food Bucks program is important both as a means to support healthy eating, and as a way to support Hawaii's agricultural sector. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and economic crisis, food insecurity in our state is at unprecedented levels, at the same time the local agricultural sector has suffered disproportionate economic losses. Now is the ideal time to expand this program and removing the \$10 per visit cap is a simple way to make sure that Hawaii families and Hawaii farmers can maximize the benefits of the Double Up Food Bucks initiative.

Fruits and vegetables tend to be more expensive per calorie than less healthy foods, which makes eating healthy a challenge for those with limited food budgets. Doubling the purchasing power for SNAP users and removing the \$10 cap makes it easier to choose fruits and vegetables when shopping. Data has shown that families use the Double Up Food Bucks Program eat more fruits and vegetables, and a greater variety of fruits and vegetables, and fewer unhealthy foods like chips and cookies. Getting more fruits and vegetables for each SNAP dollar also means that low-income families will have more in their budget to spend on things like housing and healthcare.



By prioritizing local produce this program also helps Hawaii farmers and encourages retailers to stock Hawaii grown produce. Removing the cap means greater benefits for local farmers and further incentivizes local retailers to stock more local fruits and vegetables. This helps promote a resilient circular food economy where local farmers are selling to local stores that sell to local customers. We urge you to vote yes on this measure and remove the cap so that SNAP users and Hawaii farmers can get the maximum benefits from this program. We thank you for the opportunity to testify.



February 1, 2021

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT  
Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair

Re: SB512 Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program; Double Up Food Bucks Program

### **In Support**

Dear Sen. Gabbard, Sen. Nishihara and members of the Committee:

At present, GreenWheel Food Hub operates the EBT/SNAP table at the Honolulu Farmers Market at Blaisdell Concert Hall. This is the only farmers market on Oahu accepting food stamps (SNAP). GreenWheel is aware of beneficiary's needs and shopping practices.

This incentive program encourages SNAP beneficiaries to buy local produce rather than less healthy highly processed food in supermarkets.

Removing the \$10 cap: this amount buys at most a large bunch of bananas and a couple of papayas. Removing this low cap will encourage healthy eating habits.

Additionally, bringing more income to farmers and into the local economy is an important value in these times of pandemic crisis.

GreenWheel Food Hub works to support better health outcomes among Hawaii's citizens, and [supports the passage of this bill.](#)

Larry Geller  
Project Director  
GreenWheel Food Hub

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/1/2021 1:01:16 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
laurel brier	Testifying for Kauai SWomens Caucus	Support	No

## Comments:

Senate Bill512 supports local farmers and gives SNAP recepients the incentive and ability to eat healthy. It keeps federal money in the economy and helps lower GHG emissions from the transportation of food. Farming techniques used by small and medium size farmers can also contribute to lower emissions and sequestration of carbon.



# Chamber of Commerce HAWAII

*The Voice of Business*

**Testimony to the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Friday, February 5, 2021 at 1:00 P.M.  
Via Videoconference**

**RE: SB 512, RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM  
INCENTIVES**

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara, and Members of the Committee:

The Chamber of Commerce Hawaii ("The Chamber") **supports** SB 512, which removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) beneficiaries under the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program. It also specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program and makes an appropriation to the Department of Agriculture to expand funding for the program.

The Chamber is Hawaii's leading statewide business advocacy organization, representing 2,000+ businesses. Approximately 80% of our members are small businesses with less than 20 employees. As the "Voice of Business" in Hawaii, the organization works on behalf of members and the entire business community to improve the state's economic climate and to foster positive action on issues of common concern.

The Double Up Food Bucks program is important both as a means to support healthy eating, and as a way to support Hawaii's agricultural sector. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and economic crisis, food insecurity in our state is at unprecedented levels, at the same time the local agricultural sector has suffered disproportionate economic losses. Now is the ideal time to expand this program and removing the \$10 per visit cap is a simple way to make sure that Hawaii families and Hawaii farmers can maximize the benefits of the Double Up Food Bucks initiative.

Fruits and vegetables tend to be more expensive per calorie than less healthy foods, which makes eating healthy a challenge for those with limited food budgets. Doubling the purchasing power for SNAP users and removing the \$10 cap makes it easier to choose fruits and vegetables when shopping. Data has shown that families use the Double Up Food Bucks Program eat more fruits and vegetables, and a greater variety of fruits and vegetables, and fewer unhealthy foods like chips and cookies. Getting more fruits and vegetables for each SNAP dollar also means that low-income families will have more in their budget to spend on things like housing and healthcare.



Chamber *of* Commerce HAWAII  
*The Voice of Business*

By prioritizing local produce this program also helps Hawaii farmers and encourages retailers to stock Hawaii grown produce. Removing the cap means greater benefits for local farmers and further incentives local retailers to stock more local fruits and vegetables. This helps promote a resilient circular food economy where local farmers are selling to local stores that sell to local customers. We urge you to vote yes on this measure and remove the cap so that SNAP users and Hawaii farmers can get the maximum benefits from this program. We thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony on SB 512.



*Hawai'i Children's Action Network Speaks! is a nonpartisan 501c4 nonprofit committed to advocating for children and their families. Our core issues are safety, health, and education.*

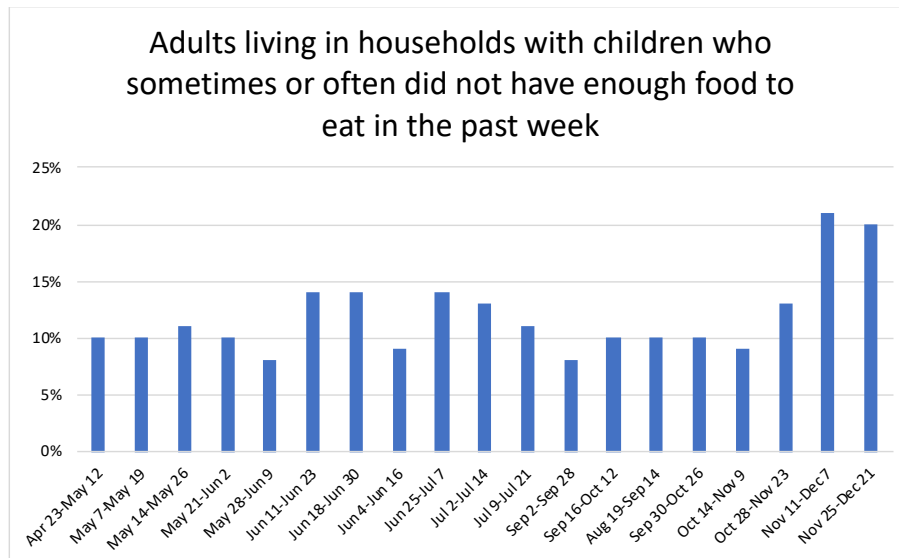
To: Senator Gabbard, Chair  
Senator Nishihara, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Re: **SB 512- Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives**  
1:00 PM, February 5, 2021

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara, and committee members,

On behalf of HCAN Speaks!, thank you for the opportunity to testify in **support of Senate Bill 512**, relating to the supplemental nutrition assistance program. DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks has been a successful program to increase households purchasing of produce, supporting our local farmers, and stimulating the economy.

During this time of economic upheaval, many families are experiencing food scarcity like never before. According to the Census Household Pulse Survey, Hawaii has seen increased food insecurity since the start of the pandemic. About 1 in 5 adults with children in their households reported not having enough to eat in the last weeks of the year. The Double Up program helps families purchase fresh produce with twice the purchasing power. Families' food budgets go farther, and the economy sees the benefit.



We have an opportunity to build on the success of the Double Up program and help families during this difficult time. We respectfully request the committee vote favorably on the bill and pass the measure out. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 512.

Kathleen Algire  
Director of Early Learning and Health Policy



# SIERRA CLUB OF HAWAI'I

## SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

February 5, 2021 1:00 PM

### In SUPPORT of SB 512:

Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

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Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara, and members of the committee,

On behalf of our 27,000 members and supporters, the Sierra Club of Hawai'i **strongly supports SB 512**, which expands the dollar-for-dollar matching program for beneficiaries of the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to use their benefits to purchase Hawaii-grown produce and proteins.

The Sierra Club of Hawai'i supports efforts to keep food sustainability strong and thriving, as well as making locally-grown produce accessible for all of Hawai'i's residents. Act 153, SLH 2019, established the Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program, to be implemented by the Hawai'i Department of Agriculture. The "double bucks" for Hawai'i-grown produce incentivizes SNAP participants to purchase nutritious fruits and vegetables- which in turn helps local farmers and our agricultural economy, improves SNAP participants' health, and supports greater local food production into the future.

Expansion of SNAP double bucks program further improves the accessibility for low-income beneficiaries to purchase healthy fruits, vegetables, and proteins, encourages sustainable agricultural practices, and supports Hawai'i's farmers, fishermen, and ranchers. Passage of this bill is especially necessary during this time of the COVID-19 health and economic crisis and we urge your support for this measure.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide testimony in **support of SB 512**.





State of Hawaii Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
The Honorable Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
The Honorable Senator Clarence Nishihara, Vice Chair

Hawaii State Legislature  
Friday, February 5, 2021, 1:00 pm

SB 512 Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara, and Members of the Agriculture & Environment Committee:

Lanakila Pacific is strongly in support of SB 512 which expands the double up food bucks program. Lanakila Meals on Wheels, a program of Lanakila Pacific, is Hawaii's largest and only island-wide home delivered meal provider for kupuna and individuals with disabilities. In 2020, we launched a produce subscription service to make it convenient and affordable for our home-bound, meal recipients to receive fresh, local produce when they receive their meal delivery. The goal of the produce subscription service was to ensure our meal recipients—many of which rely on Lanakila Meals on Wheels as a primary source of food—have access to healthy fruits and vegetables and support Hawaii's farmers.

Approximately 70% of the kupuna and individuals with disabilities subscribed to our produce service utilize Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to pay for their produce. With the double up food bucks program the produce subscription very affordable—just \$4 per produce bag. Buying local tends to be more expensive than imported food. Our recipients have expressed how they would not be able to afford the fresh produce if not for SNAP and double up food bucks. The double up food bucks program is making it possible for kupuna and individuals with disabilities to enjoy the best our local farmers have to offer.

Please support Hawaii's kupuna and individuals with disabilities by passing SB 512 and ensuring they will be able to continue to enjoy local favorites like lychee, papaya, and apple bananas which bring them both health and happiness.

Respectfully submitted,

Rona Yagi Fukumoto  
President & CEO, Lanakila Pacific

Lori Lau  
Director, Lanakila Meals on Wheels

Lanakila Pacific Board  
Scott Nahme, Chair  
Savan Patel, Vice Chair  
Kristi O'Heron, Secretary  
Dwayne Takeno, Treasurer  
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Paige Heckathorn Choy

Dawn Hirano  
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Lanakila Pacific  
Foundation Board  
Ryan Yamamoto, Chair  
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Carl Hinson

Emmit Kane  
Scott Kavanaugh  
Derek Mizuno  
Mike Robinson  
Ed Sugimoto  
Keith Suzuka  
Teri Yamashige

President and CEO  
Rona Yagi Fukumoto





**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/2/2021 6:43:07 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nancy Redfeather	Testifying for Ka Ohana O Na Pua	Support	No

Comments:

We are so fortunate as to have this program in Hawai'i that serves so many food insecure families and at the same time supports our local farming families statewide. A win for all! Please support this Bill.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/2/2021 9:44:42 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
"Phil" Augustus Acosta	Testifying for Aloha Harvest	Support	No

Comments:

We strongly support "DA BUX" as it offers a solution to three pressing issues in Hawai'i during the pandemic:

- Makes healthy foods more affordable and feeding hungry families.
- Support local farmers by incentivizing the purchase of locally-produced food.
- Stimulates economic activity by keeping food dollars within the local economy.



#### **Board Members**

##### *President*

Jason Okuhama  
Managing Partner,  
Commercial & Business Lending

##### *Secretary*

Marcus Kawatachi  
Deputy Director,  
Hawai'i Civil Rights Commission

Trina Orimoto

Clinical & Research Psychologist

Miwa Tamanaha

Co-Director,  
Kua'āina Ulu 'Auamo

Derrick Kiyabu

Hawai'i Island Resident

#### **HACBED Staff**

Brent N. Kakesako  
*Executive Director*

Keoki Noji  
*Chief Operating Officer*

Merri Keli'ikuli  
*Office Manager & Program  
Support*

Sean Tangco  
*Program Specialist*

Angelica Penaran  
*AmeriCorps VISTA*

Pua Lani Yang  
*AmeriCorps VISTA*

Date: February 3, 2021

To: Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair, Senator Clarence K. Nishihara,  
Vice-Chair, and members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment

From: Brent Kakesako, Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic  
Development (HACBED)

Re: Support for SB 512

Aloha Chair Creagan, Vice-Chair DeCoite, and Committee Members,

The Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development (HACBED) supports SB 512, which removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the match received by Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) beneficiaries under the Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program (the Program), specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the Program, and makes an appropriation to the Department of Agriculture to expand funding for the Program.

HACBED was established in 1992 as a nonprofit statewide intermediary to address social, economic, and environmental justice concerns through community-based economic development and asset building strategies. It advances its mission with core competencies in the areas of community and organizational capacity building, community and economic development planning, and asset policy development and advocacy. Over time, what has rung true across the different communities HACBED has been blessed to support is the importance of choice and control in the lives of families across the state to achieve their vision for genuine wealth – and within the context of food, this has been no different. The Program has been shown to:

- ***Reduce food insecurity.*** The Program doubles the purchasing power of Hawai'i's low-income families, freeing up room in their budget for other expenditures like housing and healthcare.
- ***Improve dietary behaviors among low-income families.*** Evaluation data from programs in other states have shown that families eat more fruits and vegetables, eat a larger variety of fruits and vegetables, and eat fewer chips, candy, and cookies.
- ***Support farmers.*** Nutrition incentives increase sales and farm income and increase farmers' customer base.
- ***Boost the local economy.*** The Program is an effective way to keep federal funding circulating in the local economy. Using the USDA's economic multiplier coefficients, the \$1.6 million in SNAP at Hawai'i farmers' markets (2016) generates nearly double the economic impact, by encouraging more consumer spending at local businesses.

SB 512 would provide a way to support our most vulnerable families with healthy options while supporting our local economy.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify,

Brent N. Kakesako

Executive Director

Hawai'i Alliance for Community-Based Economic Development



## **American Heart Association testimony in SUPPORT of SB 512 “Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives”**

The American Heart Association strongly supports 512 but suggests amendments.

### **Chairman of the Board**

Glen Kaneshige

### **President**

Michael Lui, MD

### **Board Members**

Rick Bruno, MD, FACEP

Jackie De Luz

Brandt Farias

Jason Fujita

Mimi Harris

Zia Khan, MD

Brandon Kurisu

Arnold Martines

Michael Rembis, FACHE

Andrew S. Rosen

Timothy Slottow

Jennifer Walker

The Hawaii State Legislature in 2019 invested \$100,000 to supplement local grants to fund Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) incentive programs known in Hawaii as “Da Bux.” Da Bux supplements SNAP funding and incentivizes the purchase of locally grown fresh produce by SNAP recipients. The State’s investment was subsequently matched by an additional almost \$900,000 in local private grants and matched again through a federal GUSNIP matching grant bringing the total available for Da Bux programs to approximately \$2 million. Then COVID-19 hit.

By Spring of 2020, the popular Da Bux funding was quickly being depleted as unemployment rates skyrocketed and more Hawaii residents became SNAP recipients. By summer, the American Heart Association and its health partners advocated to Governor Ige to supplement existing Da Bux funds with funding from federal CARES Act relief funding. In October, the Governor released an additional \$500,000 for the program which was again matched by local private grants. Even with that additional funding, Da Bux program funds are expected to be depleted by June 2021. Additional state funding, matchable by private grants and federal GUSNIP program matching funds (Congress recently allocated an additional \$75 million for matching funds) is needed to maintain, and potentially grow the program to make it available to a broader geographic area of Hawaii SNAP recipients. Currently, only Times and KTA supermarkets participate in the Da Bux program, along with some local farmers markets. Foodland Supermarkets has expressed interest in adding its 32 stores throughout the state to the program which would expand its availability to geographic areas currently not served, but additional program funds are needed for that to occur so as not to quickly deplete funds available for existing retail outlets.

*Serving Hawaii since 1948*

### **Our Mission:**

“To be a relentless force for a world of longer, healthier lives.”

For more information on the AHA’s educational or research programs, visit [www.heart.org](http://www.heart.org) or contact your nearest AHA office.

The “Da Bux” program matches SNAP dollars spent on fresh fruits and vegetables with a financial benefit to local growers and food retailers. Low-income families bring home more healthy food, area farmers gain new customers and make more money, and more food dollars stay in the local economy. Food markets participating in the program have seen increases in fresh produce sales. In addition, state supplemental funding would be potentially matched by federal funding adding yet another benefit to Hawaii’s investment in these important programs.

For more than 50 years, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP – formerly Food Stamps) has been vital in addressing food insecurity and nutrition in the United States. It has an impact on health, educational attainment and economic self-sufficiency. The program helps more than 45 million Americans struggling through underemployment and low or stagnant wages. The majority of benefits go to households with children, older adults or those with disabilities.

Food insecurity and poor nutrition remain problems for millions of American households. Research shows that SNAP benefits are often not adequate to last a family the entire month. A 2016 report by the Food Research and Action Center summarized the important role SNAP plays in addressing food insecurity. Importantly, the majority of SNAP recipients who are eligible for work do so while on the program, underscoring that many recipients are using the program to overcome underemployment or temporary job loss.

Although diet quality has been steadily improving in the U.S. during the past two decades, overall dietary quality is still poor. Most significantly, there is a widening gap associated with education and income. Despite the important role SNAP plays in addressing hunger, additional data indicate that SNAP recipients have worse diet quality than income-eligible non-participants. The incentives provided through “Da Bux” programs are helping to change that.

**The American Heart Association does recommend an amendment to Section 2 (b) in SB 512 that reads “to be used exclusively for the purchase of Hawaii—grown fresh fruits and vegetables, or healthy proteins that are eligible for supplemental nutrition assistance as determined by the program,...” The Association feels that “healthy proteins” should be better defined to follow dietary recommendations that limit consumption of proteins that can increase risk for heart disease and stroke. The Association suggests:**

*“In general, red meats (beef, pork and lamb) have more **saturated (bad) fat** than chicken, fish and vegetable proteins such as beans. Saturated and trans fats can raise your blood cholesterol and make heart disease worse.*

*The unsaturated fats in fish, such as salmon, actually have health benefits. **Omega-3 fatty acids**, found in fish and some plant sources, as part of a heart-healthy diet, can help reduce the risk of heart failure, coronary heart disease, cardiac arrest and the most common type of stroke (ischemic).*

*There are many types of beans – pinto, kidney, garbanzo, soybeans, etc. – and they’re all good for you.*

## *Tips for People Who Like Meat*

- *It’s OK to eat meat as long as you limit the amount and choose healthier types.*
- *One portion of meat is two to three ounces or about the size of a deck of cards.*
- *Choose lean cuts of meat. Lean cuts usually contain the words “round,” “loin” or “sirloin” on the package.*

- *Minimize processed red meats like bacon, ham, salami, sausages, hot dogs, beef jerky and deli slices.”*

By incentivizing the purchase of proteins there is a danger that SNAP recipients might overconsume unhealthy choices, thereby reducing the intended health effects of the original intent of the “Da Bux” program—to incentivize more consumption of healthy fresh produce. Better definition of which “healthy” proteins would be covered by “Da Bux” state funding would help to reduce that risk.

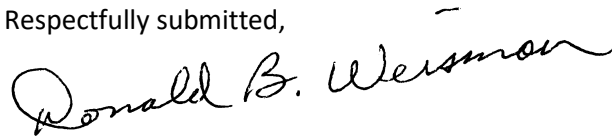
Finally, we understand that finding funding during this difficult budget crisis will be challenging. We hope, at minimum, that legislators will be able provide funding to maintain existing “Da Bux” programs through this budget cycle. The rough estimated total cost to maintain existing programs will be \$4,250,000 to support fruit and vegetables incentives discounts from July 2021-Aug 2023 (that figure could be met through combined state, private and federal funding). That would support approximately 12,500 Hawaii SNAP customers per month.

The estimated investment to add Foodland’s 32 stores to the program will be \$7,240,000 to support fruit and vegetables incentives discounts from July 2021-Aug 2023. That would support a total of approximately 24,500 Hawaii SNAP customers per month.

The state Department of Human Services reported that the number of residents receiving SNAP benefits has risen from about 155,000 in 2019 to 179,000 in October 2020, a 15.4% increase.

The American Heart Association urges legislators to support SB 512 with the suggested amendment to help reduce health disparities in our state by expanding access to fresh fruit and vegetables to those who might be economically challenged to afford access to those foods vital to improved health and reduced obesity.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donald B. Weisman". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a horizontal line above the name.

Donald B. Weisman

Hawaii Government Relations/Communications Director

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 11:02:37 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Beverly Cayco	Testifying for Wahiawa Health	Support	No

## Comments:

Support for SB512, RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM INCENTIVES.

I strongly support SB512. A person in need of food assistance should not be restricted from locally grown fruits and vegetables. Adding healthy proteins for eligible purchase through SNAP will also benefit not just local growers, but for people in need of medical nutrition needs. As a nutritionist at Wahiawa Health, I see patients working around medications to sustain life. Especially in a community center, our staff serve low-income individuals and families. Food is part of a person's self ability to thrive on without having to deal with the major effects from polypharmaceuticals. As the lead of our food pantry at the center, the low-income and even some of the middle income populations need food to be more accessible to them. Local farmers too need the people to be accessible so that they can continue growing and sustaining what Hawaii land has to offer.

Sincerely,

Beverly Cayco

Wahiawa Health Nutritionist

P: 808-622-1618 ext457

E: bcayco@wahiawahealth.org

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 12:04:45 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joseph Kohn MD	Testifying for We Are One, Inc. - www.WeAreOne.cc - WAO	Support	No

Comments:

Strongly Support SB512

- Double Up Food Bucks offers a solution to three pressing issues in Hawai'i during the pandemic:
  - Makes healthy foods more affordable and feeds hungry families.
  - Support local farmers by incentivizing the purchase of locally-produced food.
  - Stimulates economic activity by keeping food dollars within the local economy.
- In December 2020, there were over 189K SNAP recipients in the state, a 20% increase from the year before.
- SNAP can help to stimulate the economy during economic downturns, as their food dollars are often quickly spent for necessities. These dollars ripple out to throughout the supply chain, supporting farmers, retailers, and food distributor employees. Just [\\$1 of SNAP will generate \\$1.79 in economic activity](#).





**Hawaii Cattlemen's Council, Inc.**

**COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

Senator Gabbard, Chair  
Senator Nishihara, Vice Chair

**SB512**

Removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program beneficiaries under the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program. Specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program. Makes an appropriation to the department of agriculture to expand funding for the program.

Friday, February 5,, 2021, 1:00 pm  
Via Videoconference

Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment,

The Hawaii Cattlemen's Council **supports SB512** to allow for more dollar-for-dollar match received by SNAP beneficiaries and to specify that healthy proteins are eligible for purchase. We support the healthy food incentive program and are proud to produce a healthy, highly nutritious protein. Beef provides 10 essential nutrients in a single 3 oz. serving. This includes high-quality protein, iron, zinc and B vitamins. These nutrients are especially important for the development of young, active growing children.

We appreciate the opportunity to support SB512.

Nicole Galase  
Hawaii Cattlemen's Council  
Managing Director



**Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment**

**Hawai'i Alliance for Progressive Action (HAPA) Supports: SB 512**

Friday, February 5th, 2021 1:00 p.m.

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara and Members of the Committee,

HAPA strongly supports SB 512 to remove the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program beneficiaries under the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program (DA BUX). HAPA appreciates that SB 512 specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program.

The Da Bux program partners with food retailers to make Hawai'i grown fruits and vegetables more affordable for SNAP-EBT cardholders[1]. Through DA BUX, SNAP benefit dollars are doubled when they're spent on qualifying local food items at more than 70 participating retail locations statewide. Those items tend to be healthier produce and fresh foods and being locally sourced directly supports Hawai'i's food economy.

Even before the pandemic DA BUX program was succeeding. Now more than ever, it is changing lives for the better in four very tangible and important ways including[2]:

- It's putting more food on the tables of local families in need.
- It's providing incentives that encourage people to buy locally grown and produced food.
- It's strengthening the local economy by keeping more dollars in the Islands.
- It's improving local health by providing incentives to eat fresher, unprocessed foods.

The DA BUX program works and should be continued and expanded upon where possible. The program is a tangible solution to supporting local food production and helping families have access to quality fresh food.

Please support SB 512 and measures such as these that support farmers and families.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Carol Gabbard', written in a cursive style.

Anne Frederick  
Executive Director

[1] DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks <https://dabux.org>

[2] Civil Beat: Cooke, Jesse (2021) *How Local Food Program is Helping Hawai'i's Farmers and Families*  
<https://www.civilbeat.org/2021/01/how-one-local-food-program-is-helping-hawaiis-farmers-and-families>



Email: [communications@ulupono.com](mailto:communications@ulupono.com)

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & ENVIRONMENT  
Friday, February 5, 2021 — 1:00 p.m.

**Ulupono Initiative strongly supports SB 512, Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives.**

Dear Chair Gabbard and Members of the Committee:

My name is Micah Munekata, and I am the Director of Government Affairs at Ulupono Initiative. We are a Hawai'i-focused impact investment firm that strives to improve quality of life throughout the islands by helping our communities become more resilient and self-sufficient through locally produced food; renewable energy and clean transportation; and better management of freshwater and waste.

**Ulupono strongly supports SB 512**, which removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) beneficiaries under the Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program. This bill also specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program.

The Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program is statutorily housed within the Department of Agriculture, who has partnered with The Food Basket to administer the program. This program is designed to increase SNAP household purchases of locally grown fruits and vegetables at grocery stores, farmers markets, mobile markets, retail outlets, and community-supported agriculture (CSA) subscriptions statewide. DA BUX, as the program has been labeled, has been instrumental in supporting local families, farmers and ranchers, and the economy during natural disasters and times of emergency, as has been the case during this pandemic. With increased SNAP eligibility due to unemployment and economic struggles, DA BUX incentives have increased exponentially over 2020, starting at \$9,943 in January to \$164,678 in December (\$27,491 was attributed to expansion of DA BUX to include ground beef and eggs with CARES/philanthropic funds). Attached to our testimony is a 3-page flyer that sheds some light into the benefits of the program.

We recognize that you face many difficult decisions this year to balance the budget in the midst of this economic crisis, but we hope that this support for local agriculture and those suffering from hunger in our community can be considered. While this measure does

*Investing in a Sustainable Hawai'i*

include general fund appropriations, there is also program amendments that are purely policy related, without any money ask. As this measure moves along, we hope that this committee, and all future committees, will consider passing the bill with the added benefits of removing the dollar cap per visit and including healthy proteins as listed in the current version.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

Respectfully,

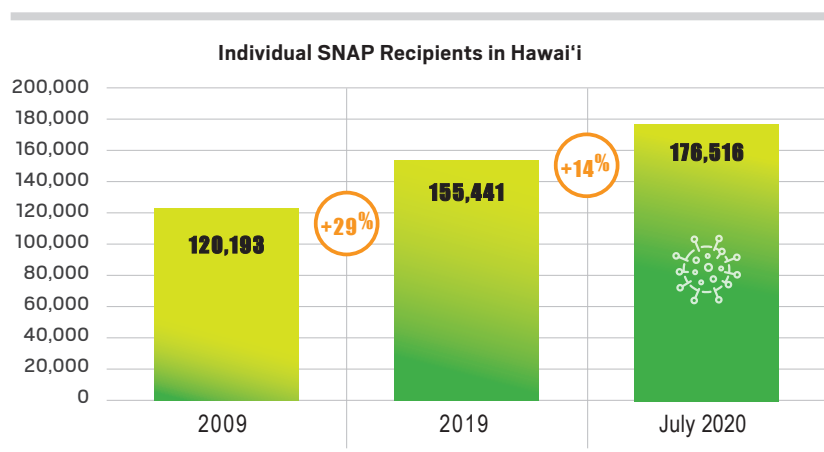
Micah Munekata  
Director of Government Affairs

Attachment

# SNAP DA BUX Expansion Proposal

*Feeding communities by uplifting local farmers*

**HAWAI'I IMPORTS APPROXIMATELY 90%** of its food and has food costs that are 82% higher than the national average. Dependence on food imports threatens the sustainability of food producers throughout the islands and places the entire population directly at risk of food shortages in the event of pandemics, natural disasters, and economic disruptions. Furthermore, with the highest cost of living in the nation, Hawai'i has the highest unemployment rate at 14.3%, and 11% of its population received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) before the pandemic.



## THE PROBLEM

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the resulting unprecedented unemployment, there has been an enormous increase in SNAP participation and significant losses sustained by local farmers. Due to loss of employment and income, the Hawai'i Data Collaborative estimates nearly 30,000 additional individuals will be eligible for SNAP benefits post-pandemic; this represents a 19.3% increase. Meanwhile, Hawai'i's local agricultural food producers are losing an estimated \$2 million in sales per week as a result of the shutdown of restaurants and hotels. This situation creates a significant need to help feed low income families AND support local farmers.



## THE SOLUTION

Invest **\$2.5 million** of state funds to bring in additional federal funds in order to expand and extend the statewide DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks program. In fall 2020, a combined commitment of \$500,000 from philanthropic partners was matched by the State of Hawai'i – thereby raising a total of \$1 million to grow the existing DA BUX program. **Based on the projected spend down rate, current funding of the DA BUX program will last through June 2021.**



## By the Numbers

**90%** Imported Food

**82%** Higher Food Costs

**1<sup>st</sup>** Highest Unemployment Rate in the Nation

**11%** Received Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Before COVID-19

## PROJECT CONCEPT

The program offers SNAP participants a DA BUX Access Card or voucher at point of sale that doubles their purchasing power when they buy locally grown fruits and vegetables – \$10 of SNAP benefits would be worth \$20 of Hawai'i grown produce. Thus, each \$1 funded into the program provides \$2 worth of local food purchases.



# Potential Impact:

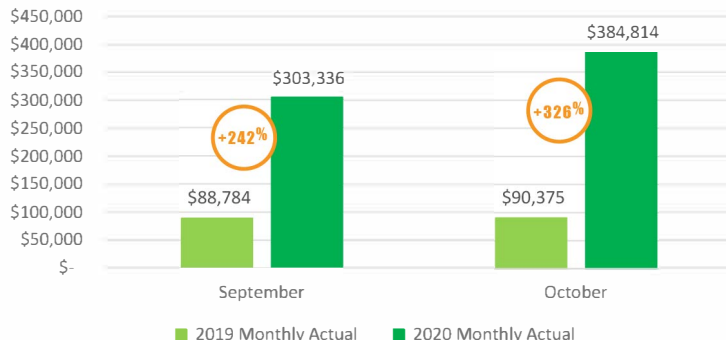
## *\$15.4 million*

WITH THE STATE OF HAWAII'S INVESTMENT OF \$2.5 MILLION into DA BUX, the investment can potentially generate an economic impact of \$15.4 million and spur 3x additional funding that supports local farmers (\$7.5 million).

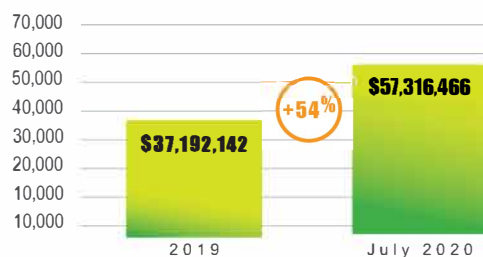
State funding	\$ 2,500,000
Federal GusNIP grant	\$ 2,500,000
Total funding for DA BUX	\$ 5,000,000
Federal SNAP purchase	\$ 5,000,000
Total funding for SNAP & DA BUX	\$ 10,000,000
Economic multiplier	1.54
<b>Potential economic impact</b>	<b>\$ 15,400,000</b>
<b>State's funding leverage ratio</b>	<b>3.0x</b>

Based on September and October 2020 data, participating local grocers experienced a significant increase in sales of local fruits and vegetables paid with SNAP benefits and DA BUX incentives compared to 2019.

### Monthly Grocer Sales of DA BUX Qualifying Local Fruits & Vegetables Purchased with SNAP Benefits<sup>2</sup>



### Monthly SNAP Benefits Paid for Hawai'i SNAP Participants



SNAP participation and SNAP benefits in Hawai'i sharply increased due to COVID-19, which is consistent with national numbers.<sup>1</sup>

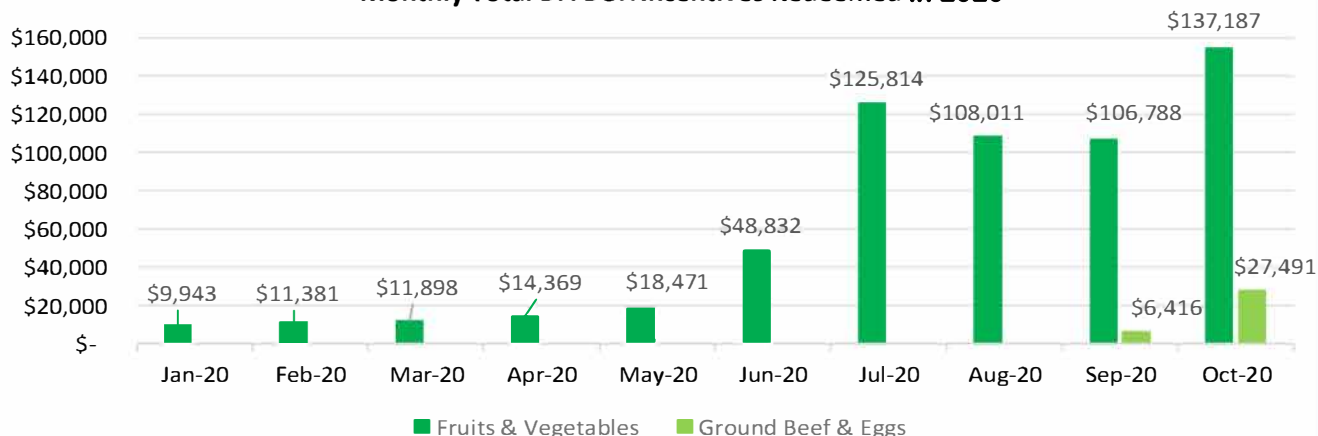
**13th** highest poverty rate (13.7% of the population living at or below the poverty line)

**14%** increase in the number of individuals in Hawai'i receiving SNAP benefits

**54%** increase in the monthly total amount of SNAP benefits paid in Hawai'i (\$57.3 million in benefits paid in July 2020)

**14x** increase in the monthly total of DA BUX incentives redeemed (\$154,000 in incentives redeemed in October 2020)

### Monthly Total DA BUX Incentives Redeemed in 2020



<sup>1</sup> Peter G. Peterson Foundation, <https://www.pgpf.org/blog/2020/09/how-has-the-coronavirus-pandemic-affected-federal-spending-on-snap>




<sup>2</sup> The list of qualifying items was expanded in 2020.



## PROJECT BENEFITS

The statewide expansion of the DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks program is a triple-win.

### Triple-Win Solution

 <b>Helps Low-Income Families</b>	 <b>Helps Farmers</b>	 <b>Helps Communities</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Doubles purchasing power</li> <li>✓ Improves access to affordable and healthy Hawai'i grown produce</li> <li>✓ Potentially reduces diet-related health problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Expands customer base</li> <li>✓ Increases sales and farm profits</li> <li>✓ Stimulates farm expansion in both acreage and crop diversity to meet increased demand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Keeps food dollars in the local economy</li> <li>✓ Builds community food self-reliance &amp; improves disaster resilience</li> <li>✓ Creates economic opportunities and stimulates the local economy</li> </ul>

### Furthermore, state funds generate significant leverage:

- Spur 3x additional funding that supports local farmers
- \$2.5 million can be matched by \$2.5 million in federal dollars from a Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP) grant, and \$5.0 million from SNAP purchases, resulting in \$10 million going toward local food purchases



- Stimulate economic activity while advancing the State of Hawai'i's objective of doubling local food production by 2030

### OBJECTIVES

1. To increase SNAP household purchases of Hawai'i-grown fruits and vegetables at grocery stores
2. To increase SNAP household purchases of Hawai'i-grown fruits and vegetables at farmers markets, mobile markets, and other produce retailers
3. To increase SNAP household purchases of community-supported agriculture (CSA) subscriptions exclusively sourced from Hawai'i farms

## OVERVIEW OF ORGANIZATIONS

The table below discusses the key partners and their roles/responsibilities.

Role	Organization(s)	Background	Responsibilities
Fiscal sponsor	The Food Basket (TFB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Awarded a USDA Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive grant in 2017 to launch DA BUX on Hawai'i Island</li> <li>- Distributed \$285,000 in benefits and served more than 5,000 households</li> <li>- In 2019, awarded a \$1.9 million grant from the USDA in partnership with HGFA to expand the program throughout the state over a two year period</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Administers the funds and provides program oversight and management</li> <li>- Reimburses retail outlets for DA BUX benefits redeemed</li> </ul>
32 participating grocery stores	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- KTA Super Stores;</li> <li>- Times Supermarkets;</li> <li>- Wai'anae Store/Supermarket;</li> <li>- Nakakuli Super</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- KTA: First grocery store in the state to implement DA BUX</li> <li>- Times: First statewide grocery chain to implement DA BUX</li> </ul>	Process DA BUX transactions for local food purchases by SNAP recipients in their stores
Community implementation partners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hawai'i Department of Health;</li> <li>- Hawai'i Department of Agriculture;</li> <li>- local health advocacy organizations</li> <li>- Hawai'i Community Foundation;</li> <li>- Hawai'i Appleseed</li> </ul>	A health and wellness advocacy and support team	Assists the program with the following: 1) Evaluation, 2) Advocacy and Outreach, 3) Nutrition and Gardening education, 4) Advertising/Promotion, 5) Health & Wellness education, and 6) Convening
Community-based organizations coordinating logistics statewide	Hawai'i Good Food Alliance (HGFA)	A grassroots-driven statewide coalition of organizations and leaders working to collectively re-build thriving community food systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Assists with recruiting new retailers</li> <li>- Provides mentoring and onboarding technical assistance for participating retailers statewide</li> </ul>





February 3, 2021

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

**Support of SB 512 Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives (SNAP) (Removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by SNAP beneficiaries under the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program; makes an appropriation to the Department of Agriculture [DOA] to expand funding for the program.)**

**Friday, February 5, 2021, at 1:00 p.m., via Videoconference**

The Land Use Research Foundation of Hawaii (LURF) is a private, non-profit research and trade association whose members include major Hawaii landowners, developers, and utility companies. LURF's mission is to advocate for reasonable, rational, and equitable land use planning, legislation and regulations that encourage well-planned economic growth and development, while safeguarding Hawaii's significant natural and cultural resources, and public health and safety.

LURF appreciates the opportunity to express its **support of SB 512** and of the various agricultural stakeholder groups who defend the goals of viable agricultural operations and the conservation and protection of agriculture, including important agricultural lands in Hawaii. The bill demonstrates the need for, and benefit of collaboration amongst different sectors of the community - business, government, and agricultural stakeholders - and the importance for them to work together cooperatively to improve the economic viability of the State's agricultural industry.

**SB 512.** This purpose of this measure is to expand the Double Up Food Bucks Program administered by the DOA to remove the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by SNAP beneficiaries, thereby making fresh locally grown fruits and vegetables sold at farmers' markets and grocery stores accessible to families or individuals who receive assistance through the federal supplemental nutrition assistance program.

**LURF's Position.** Expansion of the Double Up Food Bucks Program not only helps low-income Hawaii residents by promoting the consumption of healthy, locally grown food, but also assists farmers, ranchers and other stakeholders who own, maintain, and engage in agricultural enterprises, and who consider incentives such as that proposed by this bill significant to the

conduct of their operations to help sustain their businesses, as well as to increase local food self-sufficiency and significantly heighten local food production in this State.

As this Committee is aware, the unsustainable costs which have already been cast upon agricultural stakeholders over the past years by various safety and security standards, programs and regulations, as well as the enactment of onerous regulations relating to water systems, infrastructure, and growing and processing machinery and facilities, are now greatly exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic, proving to be overwhelming, if not devastating to the agricultural industry and the long-term objective of sustainable agriculture.

Agricultural stakeholders therefore believe SB 512 will assist in the effort to achieve long-term sustainability of Hawaii's food supply and economic growth.

By promoting consumption of healthy food, recognizing the significance of assisting the local agriculture industry, and implementing incentives which help to support the growth and maintenance of agriculture in the State, this bill significantly helps to promote economically viable agriculture and food self-sufficiency in Hawaii.

For the reasons stated above, LURF is in **support of SB 512**, and respectfully urges your favorable consideration of this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding this matter.



February 3, 2021

To: Chair Gabbard  
Vice Chair Nishihara  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

RE: **STRONG SUPPORT for SB512**

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **SUPPORT** of SB512, which removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program beneficiaries under the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program.

Blue Zones Project was brought to Hawai'i by HMSA to help increase the overall well-being of our communities and to make Hawai'i a healthier, happier place to live, work, and play. To accomplish that goal, we address ways that we can lower rates of obesity, tobacco use, and chronic disease.

We strongly believe in programs that support healthy lifestyles through good nutrition. Along those lines, SB512 truly increases equitable access to healthy foods and can make a significant difference for many families. In Hawai'i and across the country, access to fresh fruits and vegetables can be a major financial challenge, preventing many low-income families from incorporating these foods into their diets. Diet-related diseases are disproportionately higher in low-income communities. Through both the USDA guidelines and multiple studies, fresh fruits and vegetables have extensive health benefits; fruits and vegetables supply dietary fiber, vitamins, minerals, and phytochemicals that function as antioxidants, phytoestrogens, and anti-inflammatory agents.<sup>1,2</sup>

The double up food bucks incentive program can remove major barriers to fresh fruits and vegetables and can support our families, our farmers, and the economy. Furthermore, removing the \$10 daily cap can further extend the benefits of this program. In states with SNAP programs, recipients have increased their spending towards local agriculture by 70%, while supporting thousands of farmers.<sup>3</sup>

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in **support** of **SB512**.

Sincerely,

Colby Takeda, MPH, MBA  
Senior Manager

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<sup>1</sup> Slavin, J. L. & Lloyd, B. (2012). Health benefits of fruits and vegetables. *Advanced Nutrition*, 3(4).

<sup>2</sup> USDA and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010. 7th ed. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office; 2010.

<sup>3</sup> Fair Food Network. (2018). Double Up Food Bucks National Overview.



## HIPHI Board

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Exercise Sciences

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Kaiser Permanente

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McCorriston Miller Mukai  
MacKinnon LLP

Date: February 4, 2021

To: Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and  
Environment

Re: Strong Support for SB 512, Relating to Supplemental Nutrition  
Assistance Program Incentives

Hrg: February 5, 2021 at 1:00 PM via Videoconference

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The Obesity Prevention Task Force, a program of Hawai'i Public Health Institute<sup>i</sup>, is in **Strong Support of SB 512**, which provides continued funding for the Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program, expands the program to include healthy local proteins and removes the daily \$10 cap.

### **Double Up Food Bucks is a triple win for families, farmers, and the local economy.**

The Hawai'i Healthy Food incentive program, also known as Double Up Food Bucks, provides a dollar-for-dollar match on locally produced fresh fruits and vegetables for SNAP recipients. Through this program, low-income families are able to bring home healthy food, local farmers gain new customers and bring in more income, and more food dollars stay in the local economy.

Incentivizing the use of SNAP dollars for fresh fruits and vegetables not only stretches food dollars for families, but it also brings home nutritious food that the entire family can enjoy. Crediting SNAP dollars creates room in the families' budget for other household and healthcare expenses so that food dollars can be spent on locally grown food such as taro, papaya, Hamakua mushrooms, and other produce instead of cheaper, unhealthy alternatives.

### **Double Up Food Bucks provides a strong return on investment.**

In 2019, the Hawai'i State Legislature provided \$100,000 in funding to expand the Double Up Food Bucks program statewide. This small investment grew to a nearly \$2 million through matches from philanthropic organizations and federal government. This funding

allowed the program to expand to over 60 new retail locations, greatly increasing SNAP participants' access to the program.

SNAP itself is a program that is proven to stimulate the economy during economic downturns, as the food dollars are often quickly spent for necessities. These dollars ripple out to throughout the supply chain, supporting farmers, retailers, and food distributor employees. SNAP dollars have a multiplier effect, meaning that just \$1 of SNAP will generate \$1.79 in economic activity<sup>ii</sup>.

**The demand for Double Up Food Bucks has risen significantly as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Hawaii's tourism-dependent economy has been devastated by the pandemic, with the highest rate of unemployment in the nation at 9.3% in December 2020<sup>iii</sup>. There has also been a dramatic uptick in SNAP recipients – over 189K SNAP recipients in the state, a 20% increase from the year before<sup>iv</sup>.

Double Up Food Bucks' focus on locally grown produce helps to feed hungry families healthy foods while supporting the local agricultural industry. The pandemic has created a paradox where food producers saw a decrease in revenue as tourism industry-dependent hotels and restaurants closed, while food banks faced unprecedented demand from the thousands of unemployed workers. Studies have found that a lack of food security is associated with diet-related chronic disease such as diabetes and high blood pressure<sup>v</sup>. Supporting local agriculture also aligns with the renewed calls to increase local food production and decrease Hawaii's dependence on imported goods for a more sustainable and resilient food system.

Double Up Food Bucks is a triple win for health, agriculture, and the local economy, and is a lifeline for many during the pandemic. We are in strong support of this measure and respectfully ask you to **pass SB 512** out of committee.

Mahalo,



Jaylen Murakami  
Advocacy and Outreach Coordinator

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<sup>i</sup> Created by the legislature in 2012, the Obesity Prevention Task Force is comprised of over 60 statewide organizations, and works to make recommendations to reshape Hawaii's school, work, community, and health care environments, making healthier lifestyles obtainable for all Hawai'i residents. The Hawai'i Public Health Institute (HIPHI) convenes the Task Force and supports and promotes policy efforts to create a healthy Hawai'i.

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Hawai'i Public Health Institute is a hub for building healthy communities, providing issue-based advocacy, education, and technical assistance through partnerships with government, academia, foundations, business, and community-based organizations.

<sup>ii</sup> Canning, Patrick and Brian Stacy. *The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Economy: New Estimates of the SNAP Multiplier*, ERR-265, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, July 2019.

<sup>iii</sup> U.S. Department of Labor. (2021, January 26). State Employment and Unemployment – December 2020. Retrieved from <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/pdf/laus.pdf>

<sup>iv</sup> Hawaii State Department of Human Services. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Retrieved from <https://humanservices.hawaii.gov/bessd/snap/>.

<sup>v</sup> Seligman, H. K., Laraia, B. A., & Kushel, M. B. (2010). Food insecurity is associated with chronic disease among low-income NHANES participants. *The Journal of nutrition*, 140(2), 304–310. doi:10.3945/jn.109.112573



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February 5, 2021

HEARING BEFORE THE  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

**TESTIMONY ON SB 512**  
RELATING TO SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM  
INCENTIVES

Via Videoconference  
1:00 PM

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara, and Members of the Committee:

I am Brian Miyamoto, Executive Director of the Hawaii Farm Bureau (HFB). Organized since 1948, the HFB is comprised of 1,800 farm family members statewide and serves as Hawaii's voice of agriculture to protect, advocate and advance the social, economic, and educational interests of our diverse agricultural community.

**The Hawaii Farm Bureau supports SB 512**, which removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program beneficiaries under the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program. It also specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program and appropriates funds to the department of agriculture for the program.

SNAP offers nutrition assistance to eligible, low-income individuals and families, increasing their food purchasing power and improving their nutrition. SNAP also provides economic benefits to farmers participating at farmers' markets, roadside stands, CSA programs, grocery stores, and other food retailers.

Some of HFB's farmers' markets participate or have participated in the SNAP program. We believe that access to locally grown fresh fruits, vegetables, and protein to low-income individuals and families provides benefit to both SNAP participants and Hawaii farmers and ranchers.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of this measure.



# Kamehameha Schools®

Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Date: February 5, 2021

Time: 1:00 p.m.

Where: Via Videoconference

## TESTIMONY

By Pia Chock

Strategy Consultant, Community & 'Āina Resiliency Group

### RE: **SB 512 - Relating to a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives**

E ka Luna Ho'omaluku Gabbard, ka Hope Luna Ho'omaluku Nishihara, a me nā Lālā o kēia Kōmike, aloha!

Kamehameha Schools **SUPPORTS SB 512**, which removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by SNAP beneficiaries under the Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program, specifies eligibility for healthy proteins under the program, and makes an appropriation.

While we recognize the State is facing budget shortfalls, we believe that expanding the Double Bucks program is a timely, strategic investment that will assist our most vulnerable communities, while stimulating economic recovery and long-term community resilience. It is for this reason that, in 2020, along with Ulupono Initiative, Kamehameha Schools contributed to a matching funds campaign that supports the program.

We believe our educational mission is best achieved in a society that supports and enables the success of our learners. One significant component of such a society is a sustainable, local food system. For this reason, we have heavily invested in agriculture on our lands across Hawai'i to contribute to the State's Aloha+ Challenge goal of doubling local food production by 2030.

The Double Up Food Bucks Program advances this goal by making locally-grown fruit and vegetables more available to low-income residents. In doing so, the program enables healthier eating choices; reduces rural food deserts; promotes local agricultural products, thereby keeping food dollars in the local economy; creates jobs and economic opportunity; increases the customer base, sales and profits, and marketing reach for farmers; and builds community food self-reliance. Removing the \$10 cap, increasing eligible purchases, and expanding funding for the program will extend the reach of these benefits.

Accordingly, we kindly request you **PASS SB 512**.

Founded in 1887, Kamehameha Schools is an organization striving to advance a thriving Lāhui where all Native Hawaiians are successful, grounded in traditional values, and leading in the local and global communities. We believe that community success is individual success, Hawaiian culture-based education leads to academic success and local leadership drives global leadership. Mahalo nui!





HAWAI'I COMMUNITY  
FOUNDATION

To: The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair  
The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair  
And Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

From: Micah Kāne, Chief Executive Officer & President  
Hawai'i Community Foundation

Re: Testimony in Support of SB512 Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

Date: Friday, February 5, 2021

Time: 1:00 P.M.

Place: Via Videoconference

Dear Chair Gabbard, Vice-Chair Nishihara and members of the Agriculture and Environment Committee,

My name is Micah Kāne, President & CEO of the Hawai'i Community Foundation. I am submitting this testimony in SUPPORT of SB512 that removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar—for-dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program beneficiaries through the Double Up Food Bucks Program and specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program. This bill would also make an appropriation to the State Department of Agriculture to expand funding of the program.

The Double Up Food Bucks Program allows the State of Hawai'i to receive federal matching dollars that directly benefit low-income households and local farmers by doubling the purchasing power of these households when they purchase locally grown food, and believe that the incentive to purchase Hawaii-grown fresh fruits and vegetables and healthy proteins are beneficial to the participants and the local agricultural industry.

As we at the Hawai'i Community Foundation work to bring the philanthropic community as a collaborative partner to the efforts of government, the private sector, healthcare and others who continue to serve those who need assistance during the pandemic, we are supportive of measures like this. These collective efforts are necessary to help accelerate the recovery of our entire statewide community.

We strongly support SB512, and look forward to further discussion on the bill. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on this matter.

Date: February 4, 2021

To: Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair

From: Early Childhood Action Strategy

Re: Support for SB512, Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

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Early Childhood Action Strategy (ECAS) is a statewide public-private collaborative designed to improve the system of care for Hawai'i's youngest children and their families. ECAS partners are working to align priorities for children prenatal to age eight, streamline services, maximize resources, and improve programs to support our youngest keiki.

ECAS strongly supports passage of SB512, which would continue and expand the Double Up Food Bucks (Da Bux) program, which expands families' access to healthy and nutritious food. Da Bux matches SNAP dollars spent on fresh fruits and vegetables with a financial benefit to local growers and food retailers. Low-income families bring home more healthy food, area farmers gain new customers and make more money, and more food dollars stay in the local economy. Food markets participating in the program have seen increases in fresh produce sales. In addition, state supplemental funding would be potentially matched by federal funding adding yet another benefit to Hawaii's investment in these important programs.

As our colleagues at the American Heart Association note, programs like Da Bux help reduce health disparities in our state by expanding access to fresh fruit and vegetables to those who might be economically challenged to afford access to those foods vital to improved health and reduced obesity.

SB512 is a significant positive step in helping Hawai'i build back better from the pandemic and provides a proven support to the state's population of families and children. For these reasons, ECAS supports its passage.

We thank you for your consideration of this measure.



949 Kamokila Boulevard, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Suite 350, Kapolei, HI 96707  
808.675.7300 | [www.ohanahealthplan.com](http://www.ohanahealthplan.com)

February 5, 2021  
1:00 p.m.  
Via Videoconference

To: The Honorable Chair Mike Gabbard  
The Honorable Vice Chair Clarence K. Nishihara  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

From: 'Ohana Health Plan  
Rachel Wilkinson, Government Affairs Sr. Manager

Re: SB 512, Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives;  
**In Support**

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'Ohana Health Plan offers our **support** of SB 512, which removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program beneficiaries under the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program. Specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program. Makes an appropriation to the department of agriculture to expand funding for the program.

'Ohana Health Plan is a wholly owned subsidiary of Centene Corporation, a leading multi-national healthcare enterprise committed to helping people live healthier lives. Since 2008, 'Ohana Health Plan has provided government-sponsored managed care services to families—from keiki to kupuna—and individuals with complex medical needs primarily through QUEST Integration (Medicaid), Medicare Advantage and Medicare Prescription Drug Plans across the state.

As a Medicaid health insurer, many 'Ohana Health Plan members qualify for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. During the COVID-19 public health emergency, the Hawaii Medicaid program saw an increase in enrollment due to the economic downturn. As of December 2020, there were more than 189K SNAP recipients in the state, which is a 20 percent increase from 2019.

The Double Up Food Bucks program offers a solution to three pressing issues in Hawaii during the pandemic:

1. It makes healthy foods more affordable and feeds hungry families.
2. It supports local farmers by incentivizing the purchase of locally-produced food.
3. It stimulates economic activity by keeping food dollars within the local economy.

In addition, SNAP can help to stimulate the economy during economic downturns, as their food dollars are often quickly spent for necessities. These dollars ripple out to throughout the supply chain, supporting farmers, retailers, and food distributor employees. Just \$1 of SNAP will generate \$1.79 in economic activity.

We urge you to pass SB 512. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this measure.



Hawai'i Aquaculture &  
Aquaponics Association  
Hawai'i Cattlemen's Council  
Hawai'i Farm Bureau  
Federation  
Hawai'i Farmers' Union  
United  
Hawai'i Food Industry  
Association  
Hawai'i Food  
Manufacturers Association  
Kohala Center  
Land Use Research  
Foundation of Hawai'i  
Maui Farm to School  
Network (Maui F2SN)  
Ulu pono Initiative  
College of Tropical  
Agriculture and Human  
Resources - University of  
Hawai'i at Manoa

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT  
February 5, 2021 – 1:00 P.M. - Videoconference

**RE: SB 512 - Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance  
Program Incentives – In Support**

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara and Members of the  
Committee:

The Local Food Coalition strongly supports SB 512, which removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar for dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program beneficiaries under the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program.

This collaborative program helps low-income residents afford more locally-grown fruits and vegetables by providing a one-to-one match for every dollar of SNAP benefits spent at participating locations. Removing the cap and including more locally grown food will help not just our low-income residents, but local farmers and ranchers who have suffered financially due to the pandemic. With tourism not expected to bounce back any time soon, SB 512 helps sustain our agricultural workforce and operations.

This proven and successful incentive program has been implemented in more than 25 states and will promote healthy eating among Hawaii's low-income families.

The Local Food Coalition is an organization comprising of farmers, ranchers, livestock producers, investors and other organizations working to provide Hawaii's food supply.

We respectfully request your support of SB 512. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

John Garibaldi  
808-544-8319  
[jgaribaldi@wik.com](mailto:jgaribaldi@wik.com)



# HAWAII APPLESEED

## CENTER FOR LAW & ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Testimony of Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice  
Supporting SB 512 – Relating to SNAP Incentives  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Scheduled for hearing at Friday, February 5, 2021, 1:00PM

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Dear Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara, and members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in **STRONG SUPPORT** of **SB 512**, which would remove the \$10/day purchasing cap and allow the purchase of local protein under the Healthy Food Incentive Program. The bill would also appropriate funds to ensure the program continues for another two years.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is our country's most effective stimulus program, generating an estimated \$1.79 in economic activity for every \$1 spent.<sup>1</sup> Since the start of the pandemic, the number of Hawai'i SNAP recipients has increased from 154,000 in December 2019 to 189,000 in December 2020—a nearly 20 percent increase, resulting in a total of over \$700 million spent at Hawai'i food markets last year.

The Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program keeps even more of those dollars circulating in the local economy for a longer amount of time, increasing the multiplier effect to over 2 percent.<sup>2</sup> Without it, many SNAP shoppers would still not be able to afford locally grown fruits and vegetables. This results in most of these economic stimulus funds leaving the islands—right into the pockets of major mainland food companies, rather than getting channeled into our local food and agriculture businesses. This program is an impact investment for the State, channeling much-needed capital into local businesses and farms.

We are sympathetic to the budget situation this year due to the economic impact of Covid-19. However, the economic impact of the small investment this bill requests is hard to overstate. On top of the economic benefits detailed above, there are additional federal funds available for the

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<sup>1</sup> Hanson, Kenneth. (2010) *The Food Assistance National Input-Output Multiplier (FANIOM) Model and Stimulus Effects of SNAP*. United States Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Report Number 103. Available online at <https://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/pub-details/?pubid=44749>.

<sup>2</sup> Thilmany, Dawn, et al. (2021) *The Economic Contributions of Healthy Food Incentives*. Colorado State University. Available online at [https://fairfoodnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Economic\\_Contributions\\_Incentives\\_2\\_2\\_21.pdf](https://fairfoodnetwork.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Economic_Contributions_Incentives_2_2_21.pdf)

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*The Hawai'i Appleseed Center for Law and Economic Justice is committed to a more socially just Hawai'i, where everyone has genuine opportunities to achieve economic security and fulfill their potential. We change systems that perpetuate inequality and injustice through policy development, advocacy, and coalition building.*

program, which can only be unlocked through a match. Should this bill pass, Hawai'i's would greatly improve its odds of obtaining these additional funds, thereby quadrupling the State's investment.

Finally, we would like for the legislature to consider out-of-the-box revenue generating options to help cover the costs of this investment. One example, also being proposed this session, is a fee on sugary beverages. The two programs together would incentivize the consumption of healthy foods and de-incentivize the consumption of sugary drinks—a powerful combination for improving community health—and would more than neutralize the budget impact of this modest appropriation request.

This bill is truly a win for everyone—families, farmers and local businesses. There is no downside. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.



PO Box 1177 Koloa HI 96756  
808.652.5286 hawaiiSEED.org

February 4, 2021

**Hawai`i SEED Supports: SB512**

**Senate Committee on Agriculture**

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara and Members of the Committee,

We strongly support SB512, relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Incentives. Please allow healthy proteins to qualify as eligible purchases under the program. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the need and compassion for expanding the SNAP dollars is imperative. It is our duty to help one another with the most basic needs of healthy and nourishing food and clean water.

Mahalo,  
Jeri Di Pietro, President



February 4, 2021

To: The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair  
The Honorable Clarence Nishihara, Vice Chair  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment



From: Kristin Frost Albrecht, Executive Director  
The Food Basket, Hawaii Island's Food Bank

**Testimony in Strong Support of SB 512, Relating to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program**

Good Afternoon, Chair Gabbard and Vice Chair Nishihara,

My name is Kristin Frost Albrecht and I am the Executive Director of The Food Basket Inc., Hawaii Island's Food Bank. Our mission is to "End hunger in Hawaii County". We strongly support this bill.

The Food Basket has been pioneering dollar for dollar matching programs for locally grown produce since 2014 and have been the implementers of both a USDA \$1M Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive grant and a \$1.9 M for a Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive grant for DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks program. We deeply believe the passage of this bill will provide much needed food cost relief for low income families and access to locally grown fresh vegetables and fruit that they otherwise couldn't afford - particularly given the devastating economic affects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

**Why we support this bill:**

- DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks is helping Hawaii's low-income families eat more fruits and vegetables while supporting Hawaiian farmers and growing local economies.
- It provides an immediate incentive for cash-strapped families to purchase quality fresh produce. For instance, if a family spends \$20 in their SNAP benefits at the farmers market, they get \$20 in Double Up Food Bucks to spend on locally grown fruits and vegetables. This means they bring home \$40 of healthy food for just \$20.
- DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks is a win/win/win and provides great benefits to 3 sectors: Low-income families eat more healthy food, our farmers gain new customers and make more money, and more food dollars stay in our local economy. Each has a positive ripple effect of benefits.

**Communities & Farm Income:**

- DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks is helping our local family farmers and island communities.
- With this program, farmers gain new customers and make more money. This stimulates production and sends positive economic ripples throughout our local farms.
- DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks also provides an important market for beginning farmers, helping them grow their businesses.

**Economic Development:**

- DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks is a powerful way to stimulate our local economy.
- Doubling federal nutrition benefits on locally grown produce keeps more food dollars circulating in our community, creating jobs and economic opportunity.

**The Public Health Benefits:**

- DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks is designed to meet families' immediate needs for healthy food while also supporting healthier communities by addressing the underlying causes of poor diet in both urban and rural communities.
- With DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks, federal nutrition dollars work harder—simultaneously reducing hunger while supporting healthier diets for SNAP households, which can support long-term healthcare savings.

**Hunger:**

- Low-income families should not have to choose between being hungry and being healthy. With programs like DA BUX Double Up Food Bucks, they don't have to make that choice.
- This is a practical, bipartisan approach to improving the health impact of the SNAP program in our state.

We respectfully ask your committee to pass this bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.



Kristin Frost Albrecht





February 5, 2021

The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair  
The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair  
Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Re: SB 512 – Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

Dear Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara, and Committee Members:

Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to testify on HB 512, which removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program beneficiaries under the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program. It specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program. Makes an appropriation to the department of agriculture to expand funding for the program.

HMSA supports this program which expands access to healthy foods for low-income residents who are eligible for supplemental nutrition assistance program benefits.

Thank you for allowing us to testify on HB 942.

Sincerely,

Matthew W. Sasaki  
Director, Government Relations



Date: Monday, February 8, 2021

To: The Honorable Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
The Honorable Senator Clarence Nishihara, Vice-Chair  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment

From: Paula Arcena, Executive Vice President, External Affairs  
Peggy Mierzwa, Senior Policy Analyst, External Affairs

RE: **SB512 SUPPORT** Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

AlohaCare appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony in **strong support** of SB 512. This measure would expand the Double Up Food Bucks Program administered by the Department of Agriculture established in 2020, which enables SNAP recipients to double their purchasing power through a dollar for dollar match when they buy locally grown produce.

Founded in 1994, AlohaCare is a community-rooted, non-profit health plan serving 73,000 Medicaid and dual-eligible health plan members on all islands. Our mission is to serve individuals and communities in the true spirit of aloha by ensuring and advocating access to quality health care for all. We believe that health is about supporting whole-person care, including access to housing and food security, to build a stronger, healthier Hawaii.

The Double Up Bucks program has been especially critical during the pandemic. As of December 2020, there were 189,000 SNAP recipients, an increase of more than 20% from the previous year, and this number continues to rise. The program enables individuals and families to increase their ability to purchase healthy foods, generates income for local farmers, and benefits our local economy. For each SNAP dollar spent, \$1.54 is generated in local economic activity.

Statewide success has been a collaborative effort. A variety of local funders contributed \$500,000, matching the state's \$500,000. That \$1M was matched by the federal government. In total, \$500,000 turned into \$2M for purchasing healthy, local foods, helping families, and going back to our local economy. All who contributed believe that healthy people are the fabric of strong, healthy communities.

SB512 removes the \$10 cap per day and allows local, SNAP eligible healthy proteins to also be purchased. This measure will not only increase a consumer's purchasing power, but it also brings more money to farmers and into our local economy. Finally, increasing access to health foods helps Hawaii's families to choose health for themselves and their families.

SNAP participation has increased drastically in the past year. In a time, when so many are faced with a multitude of health challenges, increasing access to healthy foods is critical. We hope that you support the health our state by passing SB512.

Mahalo for this opportunity to support SB512.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 1/30/2021 3:57:22 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Amy Brinker	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 1/30/2021 6:54:54 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michael deYcaza	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 1/31/2021 9:45:27 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
P Noel Bobilin	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

Aloha, I am writing in support of SB 512. The double up food bucks program helps keep federal funding circulating in the local economy and incentivizes the use of SNAP benefits for the purchase of fresh produce. Expanding this program will help low-income families bring home more healthy food, area Farmers gain new customers and make more money, and more food dollar stay in the local economy. Expanding the successful program makes good sense. It promotes good health for families, as well as improving the health of our planet by avoiding greenhouse gases that would have been admitted from shipping produce in

Mahalo

PN Bobilin Fern Forest Hawai



**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/1/2021 12:37:16 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Bev Brody	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

Aloha Honorable Chair Senator Mike Gabbard, Honorable Vice Chair, Senator Clarence K. Nishihara and Agriculture and Environment Senate Committee members.

My name is Bev Brody and I am writing to voice my STRONG SUPPPORT of SB512.

SB512 presents a WIN-WIN-WIN! Removing the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by SNAP beneficiaries under the Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program, is a win, win, win situation, especially during these unprecedented times. Remvoing the \$10 cap would make healthy foods more affordable for struggling families, it would support local farmers as well as stimulate economic activity by keeping food dollars within the local economy! WIN! WIN!!! WIN!

I urge you to vote in favor of passing SB512.

Mahalo for yur time,

Bev Brody

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/1/2021 2:17:50 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jennifer Maydan	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support SB 512, Double Up Food Bucks. Food security, improving health and supporting our local economy has always been of great importance in Hawaii. And now as our communities face the ongoing impacts of the pandemic, these priorities are even more critical. SB 512 offers solutions to these three pressing issues and it should be supported.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/1/2021 4:01:41 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sara DiGrazia	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please support this bill.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/1/2021 4:12:34 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jennifer Noelani Ahia	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I fully support this bill. Food Security and the health of our ohana is critical, especially at this time with climate change and the current and possible future pandemics. Please pass this bill.

Mahalo,

Jennifer Noelani Ahia

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/1/2021 4:39:31 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
B.A. McClintock	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please pass this important bill. Mahalo.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/1/2021 5:00:59 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Susan Stayton	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

Senators,

I am writing in support of SB512. The cost of food in Hawaii necessitates that we need to remove an artificially set cap of \$10/day for SNAP benefits. We need to do all we can to help those in need to purchase healthy food in this time of crisis.

Mahalo,

Susan Stayton

Lawai, HI

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/1/2021 5:25:53 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Koohan Paik	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please support this important bill.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/1/2021 6:28:37 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
John NAYLOR	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

UP Da BUX !



**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/1/2021 6:40:43 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
sharon douglas	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am totally in support of programs that get nourishing food to people who need it, and foster links between farmers and local businesses. This enables us to be less dependent on the contiguous USA, and keeps the wealth circulating on our island.

Sharon Douglas, Kalaheo

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/1/2021 8:41:16 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
jeanne wheeler	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Although I haven't personally participated in this program, I know others who have definitely benefitted & there could be even more positive impact if it's expanded - please do so? Mahalo

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/1/2021 11:11:17 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Caroline Kunitake	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara and the Committee on Agriculture and the Environment,

Please support SB512.

The Double Up Food Bucks Program helps keep federal funding circulating in the local economy and incentivizes the use of SNAP benefits for the purchase of fresh produce. Expanding this program will help low-income families bring home more healthy food, area farmers gain new customers and make more money and more food dollars stay in the local economy.

We need laws to promote local healthy eating especially among low income families with children. Fresh fruits and vegetables are often more expensive than the bargain fast food deals at McDonalds. I don't want children from low income families only eating greasy burgers and french fries just because the food is cheap. As a society, we need to do better to reduce obesity and diabetes especially among children. We literally can't afford to take care of too many unhealthy people.

Mahalo,

Caroline Kunitake

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/2/2021 9:10:51 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Meredith Cross	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Meredith Cross, a resident of Kapa'a Kaua'i and a mother of a toddler. I have been a recent recipient of SNAP benefits during a time when my ohana needed help. These benefits were so incredibly helpful and this bill will only support our families on Kaua'i with more opportunity to stay healthy. Please pass this bill as I am in full support. Please see below for additional reasons why this is important to do now:

- It's putting more food on the tables of local families in need.
- It's providing incentives that encourage people to buy locally grown and produced food.
- It's strengthening the local economy by keeping more dollars in the Islands.
- It's improving local health by providing incentives to eat fresher, unprocessed foods.

Mahalo nui loa,

Meredith Cross

Kapa'a, HI 96746

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/2/2021 9:48:43 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Erin Drayer	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I fully support this as need to encourage more healthy food choices!

Thank you,

Erin

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/2/2021 4:34:46 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Will Caron	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

Please support this important bill! Da Bux program provides a dollar-for-dollar match on local produce for families in need on SNAP. In addition to helping families bring home nutritious food, it supports farmers and stimulates the local economy by keeping food dollars in the state. This is another triple win program for Hawai'i that is more than worth the funding spent to exapnd it.

Mahalo!

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/2/2021 5:11:42 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Suzanne Fields	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Of all the bills to be considered this legislative session, SB512 has triple impacts AND does what the State has failed to do to support agriculture.

You must support Double Up Food Bucks, also known locally as ["DA BUX,"](#) because this will

1) provide a dollar-for-dollar match on local produce for families in need on SNAP.

2) help families bring home nutritious food, and

3) support farmers and stimulates the local economy by keeping food dollars in the state.

We've seen the data on the amount of food that is currently imported (85 to 90%). We MUST support any and all measures that support healthy eating, sustainable ag, and farmers.

Do the right thing to support the community and the state as a whole - vote yes on SB 512.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/2/2021 5:35:37 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Shannon Rudolph	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support



**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/2/2021 6:43:30 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nanea Lo	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Hello,

My name is Nanea Lo and I'm writing in support of SB512.

The Double Up Food Bucks Program helps keep federal funding circulating in the local economy and incentivizes the use of SNAP benefits for the purchase of fresh produce. Expanding this program will help low-income families bring home more healthy food, area farmers gain new customers and make more money, and more food dollars stay in the local economy.

Expanding this successful program makes good sense. It promotes good health for families, as well as improving the health of our planet by avoiding the greenhouse gases that would have been emitted from shipping produce in.

Please support as well.

me ke aloha 'Ä• ina,

Nanea Lo

Date: February 2, 2021

To: The Honorable Mike Gabbard, Chair  
The Honorable Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair  
Members of the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Re: **Strong Support for SB512**, Relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives

Hrg: Friday, February 5, 2021 at 1:00 PM via Videoconference

Aloha Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment,

As a healthcare professional and member of the East Hawai'i community, I am writing in **strong support of SB512**, which removes the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) beneficiaries under the Hawai'i Healthy Food Incentive Program, also known as the Double Up Food Bucks Program; specifies that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program; and makes an appropriation to the department of agriculture to expand funding for the program.

Double Up Food Bucks provides a much needed, triple impact during the pandemic: (1) makes healthy foods more affordable and helps feed hungry families; (2) supports local farmers by incentivizing the purchase of locally-produced food; and (3) stimulates economic activity by keeping food dollars within the local economy.

Between December 2019 and 2020 the number of SNAP recipients in Hawai'i increased by 20%, to over 189,000 of our relatives and friends.

SNAP helps recipients stretch limited food dollars rather than having to choose between buying food or other necessities.

And, SNAP helps stimulate the economy during this difficult time. Each SNAP dollar generates \$1.54 in economic activity supporting farmers, retailers, and food distributor employees.

I **strongly support SB512** and respectfully ask you to pass this bill out of committee.

Many thanks for your consideration,

Forrest Batz, PharmD  
Kea'au, HI

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/2/2021 8:49:02 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Johanna Stone	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

I support the bill because we need to invest in our local food systems, the pandemic has highlighted [the need to Fix Hawaii's Food System](#), there are several legislative proposals that provide tangible solutions. A package of good food and agricultural bills will have a cumulative impact in helping to [address gaps and missed opportunities in our local food system](#), while supporting our farmers and food producers.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/2/2021 8:57:58 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kelsey Amos	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

SNAP double bucks is a wonderful program that is feeding people, making our communities healthier, and keeping dollars in our local economy. I support this bill and ask that you please support as well.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/2/2021 9:19:03 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Laura Michele	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Yes, another great program, Hawaii supporting Hawaii and good health. PLease support.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/2/2021 10:24:25 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Anne Thurston	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill warm enthusiastically! It will strengthen the Healthy Food Incentive Program, in particular by specifying that healthy proteins are eligible purchases under the program. I hope very much that it will pass into law.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/2/2021 11:15:25 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Dylan Ramos	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

To put it simply, DA BUX clearly works. Supporting the growth of this program is the right choice nutritionally, morally, and yes, even economically. I won't pretend to know the specifics of how this fits within the State's current budget outlook, but I know the local spending the program promotes and social benefits it delivers are worth raising the \$10 per visit per day cap, if not removing it all together. Thank you for considering this bill.

Sincerely,

Dylan Ramos

96816

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 12:28:19 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
jacqueline kippert	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

It Works on so many levels- SUPPORT LOCAL!



**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 6:53:55 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Lorn Douglas	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

As an Island state we need to do everything to enable sustainability. Please vote yes on this vital bill.

Mahalo,

Lorn Douglas, Big Island

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 8:13:45 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
James Long	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please support and pass SB512, promoting a successful and beneficial program for island families and families in need of healthy locally grown food while strengthening the island economy.

Thank you,

James Long

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 8:38:56 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Natasha Woodward	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I strongly support this bill, as it gives more opportunity for low income residents to eat healthy while also providing much needed revenue for local farmers.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 8:42:43 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jess Sobocinski	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Kā• kou,

I strongly support SB512 because it extends further support to our families who have been economically impacted by COVID-19 and the corresponding economic crisis. It also supports families by expanding their access to whole foods such as fruits, vegetables, and proteins. These types of food items are often more expensive and nutritionally-dense than processed foods, so extending access to foods under the Double Up Food Bucks programs ensures that families can adequately nourish their bodies while dependent on food assistance programs like SNAP/EBT.

Mahalo,

Jess

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 9:32:45 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Nathan Leo Braulick	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Dear Members of the Committee:

I come from a long line of family farmers but I have lived in urban areas most of life, and I am writing to support SB 512 (SNAP Incentives) because DA BUX is a program that works and it should be expanded. SB 512 will continue to:

- put more food on the tables of local families in need.
- provide incentives that encourage people to buy locally grown and produced food.
- strengthen the local economy by keeping more dollars in the Islands.
- improve local health by providing incentives to eat fresher, unprocessed foods.

I hope you will also support SB 512.

Sincerely,

Nathan Leo Braulick

2333 Kapiolani Blvd., #1604

Honolulu, HI 96826

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 10:16:24 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Bridgitte Daniel	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please help families in need have more help to bring more nutritious foods. Helping families in need to be healthier significantly impacts their cycle of poverty, inequality, and health disparities. I also believe this will help our local economy by keeping our money here supporting local farmers. Mahalo!

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 10:24:03 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Dexter Kishida	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Strongly support mechanisms that bring federal dollars to support our local agriculture and food industry. Thank you.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 10:40:34 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Christopher Boscole	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Even before the pandemic upended so much in the islands, DA BUX was succeeding. Now more than ever, it is changing lives for the better in four very tangible and important ways:

- It's putting more food on the tables of local families in need.
- It's providing incentives that encourage people to buy locally grown and produced food.
- It's strengthening the local economy by keeping more dollars in the Islands.
- It's improving local health by providing incentives to eat fresher, unprocessed foods.



**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 11:07:18 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Romala Radcliffe	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please pass this bill.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 11:07:27 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alani Bagcal	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair**

**Senator Clarence Nishihara, Vice Chair**

**Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment**

**Dear Chair Gabbard, Vice-Chair Nishihara, and esteemed members of the committee:**

**My name is Alani Bagcal and I am writing today in support for SB512.**

**I believe this bill is necessary to strengthen the local economy by keeping more dollars in the Islands and will most importantly, put food on the table of local families in need as well as improve local health by providing incentives to eat fresher, unprocessed foods.**

**Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support for this bill,**

**Alani Bagcal**

**96815**

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 12:20:08 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Cynthia Hathaway	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha. My name is Cynthia Hathaway. I have been a resident of Hawaii County for 38 years. I teach in our public schools. I see no need in having a cap on what can be spent with snap dollars when it comes to supporting our local farmers. Easy access to fresh, locally grown produce teaches the value of a wholesome diet and keeps our resources close to home.

Thank you for supporting SB512

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 3:43:11 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kathi Saks	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

As a chef and regular user of FarmLinkHawaii and Kahauman Farms CSA I choose to eat healthy and local. Fortunately, I can afford to do so. The more Kamaaina can eat local, healthy and even organic the more we can get away from our dependence on foods from other Countries, The Mainland, drugs to treat our diseases caused by our diet. This also ties into the pollution we dump into the water everytime it rains and the amount of container ships it takes to bring food to the islands. It is one large system. Time to act for Everyones' Health. The Aina and those who care for it and those who reap the rewards. Please support Bill SB512.

Mahalo

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 4:22:28 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Jessica dos Santos	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support local!

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 4:57:14 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Sharron Gonzalez	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill as it will put more food on tables of local families in need and provide incentives to buy locally grown and produced food.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 5:02:31 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michal Fentin Stover	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support SB512 because it would provide incentives for SNAP recipients to buy locally grown and produced food.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 5:42:21 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Van Wishingrad	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I am writing in strong support of SB512 which will support putting more food on the tables of local families in need and provide incentives that encourage people to buy locally grown and produced food.



**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 5:53:17 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Fern Anuenue Holland	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Strong support for this bill! Mahalo Senators.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 6:07:02 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Patricia Blair	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 6:07:36 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Raelyn Reyno Yeomans	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Strong support.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 6:10:28 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Joan Gannon	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I joan Gannon of West Hawaii ask you to vote yes for SB 512

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 6:19:33 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Sam Small	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

support

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 7:01:57 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ezikio Quintana	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support SB512

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 7:18:06 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ruta Jordans	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Healthy SNAP initiatives will move Hawaii toward self-sufficiency, giving local farmers a market.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 7:32:05 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Sunny Savage	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

eat local, for all!



**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 7:45:37 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Marion McHenry	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

This is a good bill that will improve the nutrition of our families and support our local famers.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 8:43:51 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kiana Otsuka	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha,

My name is Kiana Otsuka, and I am writing in strong support of SB 512. It is important that we remove the \$10 per visit per day cap on the dollar-for-dollar match received by SNAP beneficiaries to allow for more flexibility with the program. The DABUX program is also critical as it allows beneficiaries to get purchase more fresh food to support themselves and their families, while also supporting local farmers.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony.

Mahalo,

Kiana Otsuka

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 9:10:18 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Carolyn Eaton	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

Aloha, my name is Carolyn Eaton and I support SB 512. By passing this measure the State will be supporting both the local agriculture community and the health of our lowest income residents. Each of us deserves a diet of fresh fruit and vegetables. Local produce has been beyond the budgets of families which need food assistance. Let's change that for Hawai'i.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 9:38:34 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Greg Puppione	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

This is a great way to support local farmers, help needy families put healthy food on their tables, and build a stronger food system here in Hawai'i. Please support this important legislation!

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/3/2021 11:26:10 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Kalona Leah Nani	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**Aloha,**

**Anything we can do to incentivize buying/supporting local should be done especially fresh produce that grows abundantly in Hawaii year-round and is more nutritious than anything flown from the mainland.**

"Participants in the Hawaii healthy food incentive program who are beneficiaries of the supplemental nutrition assistance program shall receive a dollar—for—dollar match [6% up—ee—\$&9—pef—vÃ©s\$%T—pef—Ã©ay7] to be used exclusively for the purchase of Hawaii—grown fresh fruits and vegetables, or healthy proteins that are eligible for supplemental nutrition assistance as determined by the program, at a farmers' market, farm stand,..."

**Mahalo!**

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/4/2021 12:13:41 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Regina Peterson	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support this bill

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/4/2021 8:32:48 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mary Lacques	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Testimony in strong SUPPORT of SB 512 which supports increasing the amount of food purchasing power for local families in this already successful program. SB 512 also provides incentives that encourage people to buy locally grown and produced food which enhances Hawai'i's overall food insecurity issues.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/4/2021 8:58:48 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Maria Walker	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha, Members of the AEN Committee,

I support SB512, and feel it is an important step in helping families who are currently struggling financially during the pandemic to have access to fresh local produce, meats, and eggs. I live on Kaua'i and am a beekeeper, and I saw firsthand when I was selling honey at the KCC Market that the SNAP program had excellent participation at the market. Folks with SNAP were grateful for the opportunity to use their coupons at the market to obtain fresh, healthy, locally grown food, produce that was of much higher quality and with a much longer freshness life than any of the expensive produce currently available at supermarkets on island. SB512 will help them stretch their food dollars farther, and will also create more buyers for our farmers so they can be supported as they endeavor to provide a greater portion of Hawai'i's food.

Mahalo for hearing my testimony,

Maria Walker

1728 Hulu Rd.

Kapa'a, HI 96746



**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/4/2021 9:12:49 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
pahnelopi mckenzie	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

Da Bux program is amazing. In every way it supports the wellbeing of the SNAP recipients and their families. Da Bux allowed for great incentive to support local farmers and participating grocers while encouraging people to eat more fresh local produce. The access to local produce at the grocery stores is a great disappointment and this is where people mostly shop. The Da Bux program encouraged families to go to the farmers market and shop from farmers that supported the Da Bux program. I wish there was a way all farmers could be part of the SNAP program to encourage families to grow a vibrant local community while eating food right from home. The money from the SNAP program then stays in the community. I am in full support of the Da Bux program and would love to see the state put more energy into local resources to promote health and wellness for people. This time of corona is very scary and keeping the people healthy mentally, financially, and physically is the way through this. The choice of Aloha versus colonial mentality is the way forward.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/4/2021 9:17:12 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Mary Whispering Wind	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please, support SB512. Everyone needs food security.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/4/2021 9:26:48 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Colleen Inouye	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Senator Gabbard, Chair, and Senator Nishihara, Vice-Chair, and the members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment,

Please support SB 512, the bill relating to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Incentives. COVID 19 revealed the health disparities of our community, many related to the chronic conditions that are affected by nutrition. By supporting this bill you are allowing the most vulnerable in our community obtain healthy food at a more affordable cost. We need to make buying healthy food cheaper than a Happy Meal. It would also stimulate economic activity for our local farmers which is also very much needed.

Thank you for allowing me to submit my testimony in support of SB512.

Colleen F Inouye MD MS-PopH MMM FAAPL FACOG

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/4/2021 9:33:35 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Brian Murphy	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Please, support SB512.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/4/2021 9:56:00 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Madolin Wells	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Incentives will help people make the right food choices that they otherwise might not be able to, simply because of the high cost of local healthy food. Especially with junk food so readily available.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/4/2021 11:00:02 AM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Polli Oliver	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I congratulate you for considering this bill and I stongly support it's passage.

Mahalo

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/4/2021 12:24:54 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Caroline Azelski	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Support.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/4/2021 12:42:09 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Eric Micha'el Leventhal	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Expanding this successful program makes good sense. It promotes good health for families, as well as improving the health of our planet by avoiding the greenhouse gases that would have been emitted from shipping produce in. Mahalo for doing the right thing!



**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/4/2021 12:56:38 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Hunter Heavilin	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha Chair Gabbard, Vice Chair Nishihara, and Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment,

Social safety net programs to address household food insecurity are critical to sustain individuals and families across the islands. The Double Up Food Bucks program makes local agriculture products more accessible to our population and should be well funded to enhance this critical work. **I strongly support SB512** and hope this committee will as well.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify.

-Hunter Heavilin

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/4/2021 2:09:50 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
janice palma-glennie	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Aloha and mahalo for supporting this bill which will improve the health of SNAP recipients.

mahalo and sincerely,

janice palma-glennie

kailua-kona

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/4/2021 2:23:23 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Meredith Buck	Individual	Support	No

## Comments:

I strongly support this bill as there is still so much hunger in Hawai'i. I also wish to see more locally grown food on my & my friends' tables, to incentivizing this would be a great direction to go.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/4/2021 2:56:26 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Marie Cidera	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

I support our local families and economy with this bill.

**SB-512**

Submitted on: 2/4/2021 5:17:15 PM

Testimony for AEN on 2/5/2021 1:00:00 PM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Joshua Fukumoto	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Feb 4, 2021

To: Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair

Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair

Subject: Support of Bill SB512 (HDOA; SNAP; Hawaii Healthy Food Incentive Program; Appropriation (Feb\$))

Aloha,

My name is Joshua Fukumoto, and I pledge my support for this bill. I am an organic farmer from Wai'anae, and I've seen first hand how useful the double up bucks program is. The Wai'anae farmers market has provided our community with double bucks for a few years now, and as far as I can tell it benefits all of us.

The program directly helps us local growers as well as our community members who might otherwise not be willing to pay for local produce. As an example, for a family on EBT, this program would make a 6oz bag of fresh organic salad \$2, only a little more expensive than a hamburger. Being poor should not be a factor in why our community can't enjoy healthy food. With double bucks at the Wai'anae farmers market, EBT made up about 1/5th of our sales, so people will choose good food if it's affordable.

This program helps us and all other local producers by incentivising people to buy local, keeping money in Hawai'i, and allowing us to continue serving our community.

Mahalo,

Joshua Fukumoto